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COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WORK IN AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS.

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AND STATE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGES,
COOPERATING.

STATES RELATIONS SERVICE, OFFICE OF
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WASHINGTON, D. C.

BOYS' AND GIRLS' CLUB WORK.

CARE OF GROWING POULTRY DURING WARM WEATHER.

Prepared by the Animal Husbandry Division, Bureau of Animal Industry, United States Department of Agriculture.

The care of growing chicks during the summer is one of the most important factors in poultry raising. The chicks may be hatched from strong, vigorous stock and carefully brooded, but unless they receive the proper attention during the warm months their growth will be retarded. In other words, the principal idea in feeding and caring for growing chicks should be to prevent their dying, and to so manage them that they will mature into well-developed fowls.

ESSENTIALS TO PROPER GROWTH.

There are six essentials to proper growth: (1) Proper housing, (2) feed and water, (3) free range, (4) shade, (5) cleanliness—freedom from lice and mites, and (6) general management.

1. Proper housing.—Growing chicks should be provided with a house that will give them a place to stay in bad weather and at nights. No particular style of house is recommended, but it should be so built that it will provide the chicks with ample ventilation, dryness, sunshine, and so arranged that it can be easily and frequently cleaned. The lumber from piano and dry-goods boxes can be used in building such a house, and when covered with ordinary roofing paper so as to keep out the rain, will make desirable quarters. It is recommended that such houses be built on the colony plan so that they can be moved from place to place, thus providing the chicks with fresh ground to range over. The house shown in figure 1 is constructed from two piano boxes and covered with tar paper. In placing the chicks in their growing house for the first time, it is best to confine them for several days, erecting a temporary yard so

that they will know where to return when allowed their liberty. Care should be taken not to crowd the chickens by placing too many in any one house. As the chickens increase in size they should be thinned out and placed in other houses, so as to avoid crowding.

2. Feed and water.—Feed for growing chicks may be divided into three groups: Grain feed, dry mash, and green food.

Grain feed.—In addition to the grain food which the chicks are apt to find when on free

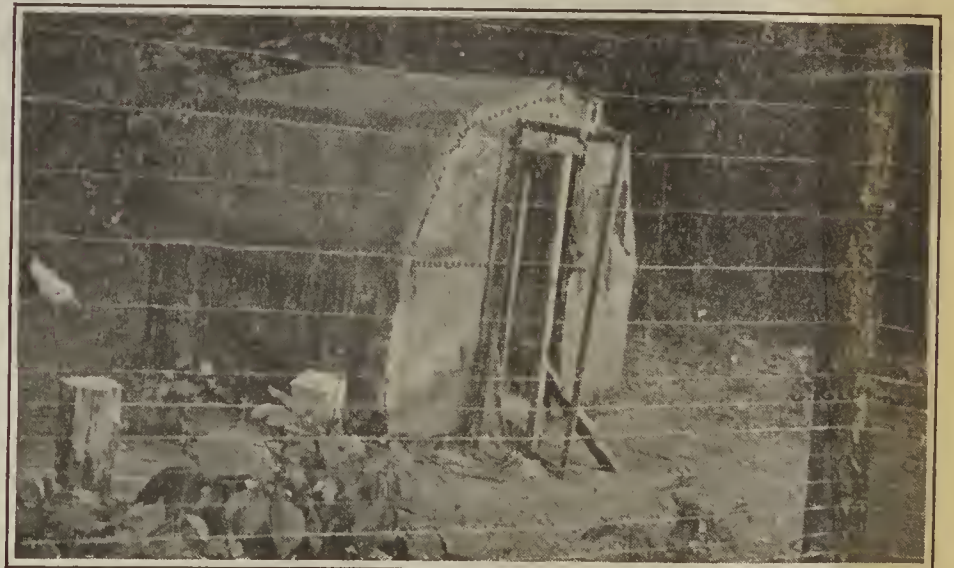


FIG. 1.—Colony house constructed from two piano boxes and covered with tar paper.

range, a grain mixture should be given morning and evening. A ration of 6 parts cracked corn, 1 part wheat, 2 parts hulled oats, and 1 part kafir corn is suggested. As the chicks get older clipped oats may be used instead of hulled oats.

Dry mash.—In addition to the above feed a dry mash should be fed in a hopper to which the chicks can have access at all times. The following dry mash is suggested:

- 2 pounds of corn meal.
- 1 pound of middlings.
- 4 pounds of oatmeal.
- 2 pounds of wheat bran.
- 2½ pounds of beef scrap.

Charcoal, grit, and oyster shell should be provided so that the chicks can help themselves whenever they want to.

Skim milk.—If a continuous supply of skim milk can be readily obtained it may be fed separately in a pan provided for the purpose, and the beef scrap in the above ration reduced one-half.

Green food.—Whenever it is possible growing chicks should be allowed free range, so that they may obtain as much natural green food, such as grass, alfalfa, clover, etc., as they need. Green food is an excellent tonic for chicks, and when they can not obtain it on range, such feed

rapid, vigorous growth. Confining the chicks to a limited range not only increases the chance of disease and loss of vigor, but tends to increase the cost of feeding. Chickens on free range obtain considerable food, such as worms, bugs, etc., that helps to reduce the cost of feeding considerably.

4. Shade.—Plenty of shade should be provided for growing chicks, in order that they may thrive and grow during warm weather. Shade provided by growing plants or trees is much cooler than that afforded by buildings or other artificial means. Chicks allowed to range in an orchard will not only find ample shade and



FIG. 2.—Wire frame to protect food of growing chicks.

as sprouted oats, cut clover, alfalfa, mangel beets, cabbage, etc., should be fed daily.

Water.—The importance of *clean, fresh* water can not be overestimated. In very hot weather fresh water should be given them twice daily. Whenever possible the pan of water should be placed in the shade to keep cool. The water pan should be cleaned every day before fresh water is added. On many farms where both fowls and chicks have access to the same range a wire-covered frame such as shown in figure 2 should be made so as to protect the feed intended for the growing chicks from the older fowls. It will be noticed that an opening of about 4 inches is left at the bottom of the frame so as to allow the chicks to run under to get their feed.

3. Free range.—An abundance of free range should be provided if the chicks are to make

green food, but will benefit the trees as well as themselves by destroying insects and worms. When an orchard or woodlot can not be used for this purpose the growing of corn or sunflowers will help to provide the necessary shade. Artificial protection against the sun's rays may be obtained by supporting frames covered with burlap a few feet above the ground.

5. Cleanliness — freedom from lice and mites.—Every effort should be made to keep the coops or houses clean and sanitary. Disease most frequently starts in unclean quarters. The house should be cleaned at least once a week. Clean sand and straw litter should be scattered over the floor of the houses, so as to assist in keeping them clean. When the chicks are confined to a limited range, the ground should be spaded up at frequent intervals, so as to provide fresh ground for them to scratch

in. Chicks should be examined frequently to see if they are infested with lice or mites. When these are found, every effort should be made to get rid of them by following the methods suggested in the circular (K-7) of this series on "Poultry Lice and Mites."

6. General management.—Just as soon as the chicks develop sufficiently so that their sex can be determined, the cockerels should be separated from the pullets, in order to assist the proper growth of both pullets and cockerels. As soon as the cockerels are of sufficient size, those not intended to be kept for breeders the following year should be marketed or caponized.

NOTE.—This is one of a series of follow-up circulars (the K series) printed for the exclusive use of club members and club leaders. Other persons desiring poultry literature should write to their State agricultural college or ask for bulletins noted below.

PUBLICATIONS OF UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE RELATING TO POULTRY.

AVAILABLE FOR FREE DISTRIBUTION BY THE DEPARTMENT.

Capons and Caponizing. (Farmers' Bulletin 452.)

Hints to Poultry Raisers. (Farmers' Bulletin 528.)

Important Poultry Diseases. (Farmers' Bulletin 530.)

Boys' and Girls' Poultry Clubs. (Farmers' Bulletin 562.)

Poultry House Construction. (Farmers' Bulletin 574.)

Natural and Artificial Incubation of Hens' Eggs. (Farmers' Bulletin 585.)

Natural and Artificial Brooding of Chickens. (Farmers' Bulletin 624.)

Community Egg Circles. (Farmers' Bulletin 656.)

Simple Trap Nest for Poultry. (Farmers' Bulletin 682.)

Squab Raising. (Farmers' Bulletin 684.)

Duck Raising. (Farmers' Bulletin 697.)

Goose Raising. (Farmers' Bulletin 767.)

Turkey Raising. (Farmers' Bulletin 791.)

Mites and Lice on Poultry. (Farmers' Bulletin 801.)

Standard Varieties of Chickens. I. The American Class. (Farmers' Bulletin 806.)

Marketing Eggs by Parcel Post. (Farmers' Bulletin 830.)

The Guinea Fowl. (Farmers' Bulletin 858.)

Backyard Poultry Keeping. (Farmers' Bulletin 889.)

Standard Varieties of Chickens. II. Mediterranean and Continental Classes. (Farmers' Bulletin 898.)

**FOR SALE BY THE SUPERINTENDENT OF DOCUMENTS,
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE, WASHINGTON, D. C.**

Commercial Fattening of Poultry. (Department Bulletin 21.) Price, 10 cents.

White Diarrhea of Chicks, with Notes on Coccidiosis in Birds. (Bureau of Animal Industry Circular 128.) Price, 5 cents.

A System of Poultry Accounting. (Bureau of Animal Industry Circular 176.) Price, 5 cents.

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